



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/927,963	08/10/2001	David K. Lee	F- 260	6878
919	7590	04/12/2005	EXAMINER	
PITNEY BOWES INC. 35 WATERVIEW DRIVE P.O. BOX 3000 MSC 26-22 SHELTON, CT 06484-8000			BASS, JON M	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			3639	
DATE MAILED: 04/12/2005				

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

fe

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	09/927,963	LEE ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Jon Bass	3639	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 08 August 2001.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-21 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-21 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

1. This Office Action is in response to "Tracking mail Items through Distribution".

Information Disclosure Statement

2. The examiner considered the following Information Disclosure Statement (IDS)

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

Claims 1-21 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by John O'Callaghan et al. (US Pub No. 2004/0211838) referenced as O'Callaghan.

As Per Claim1:

O'Callaghan discloses a method for tracking through a carrier distribution system a mail item created by a sender, the method comprising the steps of: ([pg.1, 0006]; automatically verified and transported along a path).

inducting the mail item into the carrier distribution system, the mail item having thereon a unique sender generated identifier; obtaining the unique sender generated identifier from the mail item during processing of the mail item in the carrier distribution system; ([pg1, 0007]; infeed means for transporting the article from input to processing stages).

assigning a unique carrier generated identifier to the mail item; associating the unique sender generated identifier with the unique carrier generated identifier; the carrier tracking the location of the mail item through the carrier distribution system using the unique carrier generated identifier; and allowing the sender to obtain location information about the mail item using the unique sender generated identifier without the sender having knowledge of the unique carrier generated identifier, ([pg1, 0012]; include a number of parameters such as barcodes).

- Also discloses a method where the verification apparatus is to read affixed information;(pg.1, [0006]):
- Various kinds of barcode information;(pg 1, [0010]):
- Recognition of indicia appearing on article;(pg.1, [0010]):

Art Unit: 3639

- Comprise identification printing means for identification of the article; (pg .1, [0008]):
- Serial Communication links are used to for exchange of messages, and data; (pg.2, [0018]):

As Per Claim 2:

O'Callaghan discloses a method further comprising applying the unique carrier generated identifier to the mail item (pg.1, [0006], recognition of the indicia on the article).

As Per Claim 3 and 4:

O'Callaghan discloses a method further comprising applying the unique carrier generated identifier in a bar code form (pg. 1, [0006], information is affixed to article, verifying the data).

As Per Claim 5:

O'Callaghan discloses a method wherein the mail item has a recipient address printed thereon and the unique sender generated identifier is located on the mail item proximate the recipient address and further comprising using the unique sender generated identifier for locating the recipient address (pg1, [0012], include numbers such as barcodes and address information, and postage).

As Per Claim 6:

O'Callaghan discloses a method wherein the unique sender generated identifier includes an address and further comprising the carrier obtaining the address from the unique sender generated identifier and supplying to the address information about the location of the mail item (pg1, [0012], include numbers such as barcodes and address information, and postage and destination).

As Per Claim 7 and 17:

O'Callaghan discloses a method wherein the address is one of an e-mail address, a pager number, and a facsimile machine number, (pg. 3, [0033], mail piece will include address location, words, characters or other indicia).

As Per Claim 8 and 18:

O'Callaghan discloses a method wherein the unique sender generated identifier includes an electronic address and additional data that uniquely identifies the mail item,(pg. 3, [0033], mail piece will include address location, words, characters or other indicia).

As Per Claim 9:

O'Callaghan discloses a method further comprising uniquely associating the unique sender generated and unique carrier generated identifiers by storing them in a file,(pg 3, [0035]; the system assigns each mail piece to a data file).

As Per Claim 10:

O'Callaghan discloses a method further comprising reading the unique carrier generated identifier at a plurality of locations throughout the carrier distribution system, storing in the file a date stamp, a time stamp, and a location identifier each time the reading of the unique carrier generated identifier occurs, and associating in the file the date stamp, time stamp, and location identifier with the unique carrier generated identifier and the unique sender generated identifier, ([pg1, 0012]; barcode, postage value, destinations required for database).

- Also discloses the system assigns each mail piece to a data file (pg.3, [0035])
- Scan field is illuminated by a high intensity light system, (pg 3, [0034])
- Mail piece indicates selected words and characters on the indicia, (pg3,[0033]).
- Mail piece is measured from the image or from the sensors (pg3, [0031]).
- The scanned image is processed by the address on the mail piece and reading the address and registers the barcode, (pg 3, [0036]).

As Per Claim 11:

O'Callaghan discloses a system a carrier distribution system for tracking a mail item having a unique sender generated identifier thereon, the

Art Unit: 3639

carrier distribution system comprising: means for reading the unique sender generated identifier from the mail item; means for including a unique carrier generated identifier on the mail item; a data base that associates the unique sender generated identifier with the unique carrier generated identifier; at least one sensor that reads the unique carrier generated identifier from the mail item and provides location information to the data base that is associated with the unique carrier generated identifier so that at times when the carrier distribution system receives a location query from an entity about the mail item via submission of the unique sender generated identifier the location information is obtainable from the database without requiring submission of the unique carrier generated identifier by the entity,(The system assigns each mail piece to a data file (pg.3, [0035])).

- Scan field is illuminated by a high intensity light system, (pg 3, [0034])
- Mail piece indicates selected words and characters on the indicia, (pg3,[0033]).
- Mail piece is measured from the image or from the sensors (pg3, [0031]).
- The scanned image is processed by the address on the mail piece and reading the address and registers the barcode, (pg 3, [0036]).

As Per Claim 12:

O'Callaghan discloses a system wherein the means for reading is an automatic facer/canceler, (The scanned image is processed by the address

Art Unit: 3639

on the mail piece and reading the address and registers the barcode, (pg 3, [0036]).

As Per Claim 13:

O'Callaghan discloses a system wherein the unique carrier generated identifier is printed in a bar code form, (ID number has been printed on the mail piece and the barcode; pg3, [0036]).

As Per Claim 14:

O'Callaghan discloses a system wherein the unique sender generated identifier is in a bar code form (ID number has been printed on the mail piece and the barcode; pg3, [0036]).

As Per Claim 15:

O'Callaghan discloses a system wherein the mail item has a recipient address printed thereon and the unique sender generated identifier is located on the mail item proximate the recipient address and the advanced facer/canceler detects the unique sender generated identifier and uses such detection for locating the recipient address, (the system identifies and verifies the accuracy within the address database, col3, [0036]).

As Per Claim 16:

O'Callaghan discloses a system wherein the unique sender generated identifier includes an address and the means for reading obtains the address

Art Unit: 3639

from the unique sender generated identifier and supplies to the address an indication that the mail item has been read at the means for reading, (Each message is acknowledged with a ACK, pg3 [0042]).

As Per Claim 19:

O'Callaghan discloses a system wherein the location information includes a date stamp, a time stamp, and a location identifier (ID number has been printed on the mail piece, stamp value, barcode value and identifies and verifies and the address, pg 3, [0036]).

As Per Claim 20:

O'Callaghan discloses a system wherein the unique sender generated identifier includes an indication of the type of premium service that is requested for the mail item,(Verifies that aspects of the mail are consistent with the information provided, pg3, [0036]).

As Per Claim 21:

O'Callaghan discloses a system wherein the means for including is a printer, (Mail piece by the inkjet printer; pg3,[0036]).

Conclusion

Any concerns in regard to this communication, the examiner **Jon Bass** can be reached at **(571) 272-6905** between the hours of **9-6pm Monday through Friday**. The fax number for the establishment where the application is being process is **(703) 872-9306**.

If an attempt to reach the examiner is unsuccessful for any reason, the examiner's immediate supervisor, **John Weiss** can be reached at **(571) 272-6812**.


Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-271-9197 (toll free).

Any response to this action should be mailed to:

Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks

C/O Technology Center 3600

Washington, D.C. 20231


THOMAS A. DIXON
PRIMARY EXAMINER